DEPARTMENT OF STATE

BRIEFING PAPER

(167) R

December 4, 1980

MEMORANDUM

To: S/RTT - Mr. Perle

From: PA - William J. Dyess \S\

Subject: American Public Opinion on East-West Issues

At your request, we submit this overview of American public perceptions of East-West issues. It draws on analyses presented in briefing memoranda dating back to 1976, when our opinion analysts were reporting to Secretary Kissinger that Americans were dubious about detente.

For each issue treated herein, the memoranda containing the most current and complete data are referenced and attached.

Attachment:
As stated

cc(without tabs): S/S - Mr. Seitz
S/S - Mr. Bellamy

DEPARTMENT OF STATE A/CDC/MR
REVIEWED BY [signature] DATE 5/6/85
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Summary of Requirements
(dollar amounts in thousands)

Office of Congressional Relations

Summary of Resources	1981 Actual	1982 Current Estimate	1983 Request	1983 Increase over 1982
Positions: Total Americans (domestic)	35	35	35	--
Funds	$1,414	$1,673	$1,696	$23

Page No.	Summary of Built-in Changes	Built-in Changes Perm. Pos.	Built-in Changes Amount	Total Perm. Pos.	Total Amount
	1982 current estimate			35	$1,673
	Built-in changes:				
--	Annualization	--	$16		
--	Wage increases	--	6		
7-6	Price increases	--	1		
	Subtotal, built-in changes			--	23
	1983 base			35	1,696

Page No.	Comparison by Activity	1981 Actual Perm. Pos.	1981 Actual Amount	1982 Current Estimate Perm. Pos.	1982 Current Estimate Amount	1983 Base Perm. Pos.	1983 Base Amount	1983 Request Perm. Pos.	1983 Request Amount	Program Change from 1983 Base Perm. Pos.	Program Change from 1983 Base Amount
7-7	Executive direction and policy formulation	22	$891	22	$1,073	22	$1,088	22	$1,088	--	--
7-8	Administrative and staff activities	13	523	13	600	13	608	13	608	--	--
	Total	35	1,414	35	1,673	35	1,696	35	1,696	--	--

Perceptions of Soviet Global Intentions

During the period spanning the take-over of Embassy Tehran and the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, the American public's view of Soviet global intentions soured dramatically. Roper polls show that from October, 1979, to February, 1980, the proportion of the American public who perceived the Soviet Union as seeking "global domination" rose from 55 percent to 73 percent. Among the 73 percent, more than half (39 percent of the total public) believed the Soviet Union would "risk a major war" to achieve global domination. This 39 percent figure was more than double the 18 percent who gave this answer to the same question four months earlier.

By last winter, therefore, Americans were viewing Soviet intentions about as dubiously as in 1950, when a Gallup poll found that 82 percent of the public believed the USSR sought to be "the ruling power of the world." (For details, see memo of April 11, 1980, at Tab 1.)

Roper has just released the findings from his October repetition of this question. They show that Americans' interpretation of what the Soviet Union is up to has softened--slightly--since February. Instead of 39 percent believing the Soviet Union would risk "a major war" to achieve global domination, that view is now held by 28 percent. Overall, two-thirds of the public now believes the Soviet Union seeks "global domination":

	October 1980		February 1980		October 1979	
Russia seeks to protect itself	5%		5%		9%	
Russia seeks to compete with the U.S.	21		18		30	
Russia seeks global domination but won't risk major war	38	66%	34	73%	37	55%
Russia seeks global domination, and will risk major war	28		39		18	
No opinion	8		4		6	

Goals and Objectives

Office of Congressional Relations

The goals for the Office of Congressional Relations during FY-1983 are to:

a. Promote passage of administration-supported legislation related to foreign policy.

b. Present the Department to the Congress as a credible and effective manager of foreign policy.

c. Provide an effective organizational framework for the participation of Congress in the formulation of foreign policy.

d. Provide first-hand experience with the legislative process for Department officers in order to facilitate the conduct of Department-Hill relations.

e. Keep the Department accurately informed and up to date regarding attitudes and activities of Congress.

f. Improve responsiveness to Congressional requests for information, travel assistance, and constituent services and to reply to Congressional correspondence in a more timely manner.

g. Coordinate all Departmental responses to Hill inquires and request.

Attitudes Toward U.S.-Soviet Military Capability

During the past four years, the public's perception of U.S. military capability vis-a-vis the Soviet Union has steadily darkened.

By July, 1980, a majority of the American public was perceiving the USSR as militarily stronger than the U.S. The proportion holding this view had more than doubled since December, 1976 (57 percent vs. 27 percent). During the same period, the proportion seeing the U.S. as militarily stronger than the USSR had declined from 21 percent to 6 percent. (See memo of August 6, 1980, p. 1, at Tab 3.)

The poll questions cited above were worded in terms of "military" capability, and did not distinguish between nuclear military strength and conventional military strength. Roper polls taken at various times in 1980 show that a majority of Americans (51 percent) now believes the U.S. is behind the Soviet Union in conventional capability and a plurality of Americans (43 percent) now believes the U.S. is behind in nuclear military capability.

Conventional Capability (Feb. 1980)		Nuclear Capability (Sept./Oct. 1980)
51%	U.S. Behind	43%
29	U.S. About Even	29
10	U.S. Ahead	15
10	Don't Know	13
(memo of April 11, 1980 at Tab 1)		(newly released and reported data)

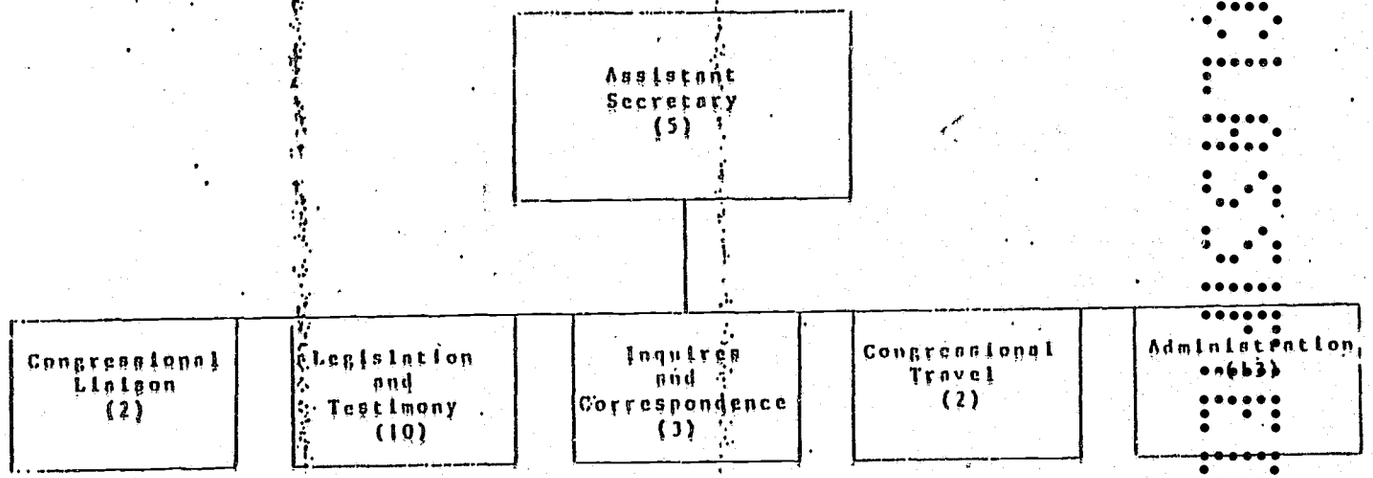
Concurrent with the widening public perception that the Soviet Union is growing militarily more powerful than the U.S. has been a growing public preference for attaining military superiority over the Soviet Union. CBS polls show that in June, 1979, the public was evenly divided between those who thought the U.S. should be militarily superior to the Soviet Union and those who thought it should be militarily equal. By August, 1980, a majority had come to prefer military superiority, and this majority increased sizably during September, 1980, after Iran and Iraq went to war:

Preferred U.S. Military Strength	Late September 1980	August 1980	June 1979
Superior to USSR	60%	51%	42%
About equal	32	42	45
Not as strong as USSR	4	2	7
No opinion	4	5	6

(See memo of October 6, 1980, attached at Tab 4.)

1983
Organization Chart
Total: 35

Office of Congressional Relations



Attitudes Toward U.S.-Soviet Relations

Despite the negative perceptions and attitudes previously outlined, the American public has continued to accept the Soviet Union as a significant actor on the world stage with whom the U.S. should try to achieve some form of modus vivendi. The public has held to this view even as its concern regarding U.S. military capability intensified and its preference for higher defense spending increased.

The public's ability to distinguish between the countries it likes and the countries it considers important in terms of U.S. interests is illustrated in polls conducted by Potomac Associates in 1978 and again in 1979. Each time, respondents were asked: "When it comes to pursuing our interests all around the world, how important do you think it is for the U.S. to try to get along well with each of the following countries--very important, fairly important, not so important, or not important at all?"

Both polls listed 14 of the same countries. In both polls, the Soviet Union received the second-highest designation as "very important" for the U.S. to try to get along with.

	Percentage Answering "Very Important"	
	1979	1978
The Top Ranking Countries:		
Canada	76%	64%
Soviet Union	67	61
Mexico	67	--
Saudi Arabia	63	51
The Bottom Ranking Countries:		
India	33	23
North Korea	29	22

(Data for 1978 from memo of November 2, 1978, attached at Tab 6; data for 1979 newly released and reported.)

Even as the public was taking an increasingly dim view of the Soviet Union during the period 1979-80, the interest in seeking a mutual accommodation did not lessen. The Roper poll repeated a question that inquired about a list of "things...the government should be making a major effort on now...or something not needing any particular government effort now."

	June 1980 (June 1979 in parentheses)	
	Major Effort	No Effort
Trying to improve relations between the U.S. and Russia	47% (41)	11% (11)

(See memo of August 15, 1980, attached at Tab 7.)

Permanent Staff by Organizational Unit

Office of Congressional Relations

	1981 Actual		1982 Current Estimate		1983 Request	
	Pos.	Salaries	Pos.	Salaries	Pos.	Salaries
Assistant Secretary	5	$156,000	5	$172,000	5	$175,000
Congressional Liaison	2	78,000	2	83,000	2	84,000
Legislation and Testimony	10	386,000	10	421,000	10	429,000
Inquiries and Correspondence	3	117,000	3	126,000	3	128,000
Congressional Travel	2	76,000	2	84,000	2	85,000
Administration	13	465,000	13	508,000	13	515,000
Total	35	1,278,000	35	1,394,000	35	1,416,000

Attitudes Toward Trade and Sanctions

In 1978, even before the recent souring of public sentiments toward the Soviet Union, selling it products that embodied advanced technology was opposed by almost two-thirds of the public (63 percent). Only 12 percent favored such sales and another 19 percent wanted to distinguish among various products.

Poll findings of several years ago on other kinds of trade are less clear-cut. But, it appears that a majority favored such trade at then-current levels. (See memo of June 23, 1978, at Tab 9.)

By February, 1980, a majority (62 percent) favored restricting U.S.-Soviet trade in general and some 80 percent of the public favored the newly imposed embargoes on high-technology products and grain. Grainbelt support for the wheat embargo was lower than the national level of support. However, Iowa farmers apparently turned around from majority disapproval in early January, 1980, to plurality support later that month. (See memos of January 16 and January 31, 1980, at Tab 10.)

At the same time, the "dual approach" previously discussed prevailed in some areas of potential U.S.-Soviet exchange: A majority of the public continued to favor the idea of "joint efforts with the Soviet Union to solve energy problems" and continued to oppose "prohibiting the exchange of scientists between the U.S. and the Soviet Union." (See memo of July 11, 1980, at Tab 8.)

One sanction for which substantial public support was evident from the beginning was the Olympic boycott, which continued to be favored by 60-plus percent of the public up until the holding of the games. Nor did the public have any second thoughts about the boycott. Afterward, 67 percent told the NBC poll they approved of the boycott in retrospect, even as 55 percent of those interviewed in the same poll said they thought the boycott had been an ineffective form of protest. (See memos of March 21 and September 9, 1980, at Tab 11).

Attitudes Toward "Playing the China Card"

Public sentiment favoring China over the USSR emerged clearly after "normalization." Nevertheless, Americans are inclined to favor caution in improving U.S. ties with China for two reasons: 1) doubts as to whether China's present friendliness will last and 2) the preference for not exacerbating U.S.-Soviet relations.

Even in the wake of the Afghanistan invasion, the public showed its reluctance to see the "China card" played in its responses to this Roper poll question, asked last April:

"One of the ways that has been proposed for the U.S. to respond to the Russian invasion of Afghanistan is for this country to strengthen its ties with Mainland China. But there are a lot of uncertainties about such a course. In light of what you know about Mainland China, Russia, and the current international situation, which one of these statements [respondent shown card] comes closest to your ideas of what U.S.-Mainland China relations should be?"

"We should strengthen our ties to Mainland China even if this hurts our relationship with Russia.	20%
"We should strengthen our ties to Mainland China but not in ways that hurt our relations with Russia, because Russia is more important than China in world affairs.	21
"We should move slowly to strengthen our ties to Mainland China because we really don't know what could happen in the future--the Chinese might become unfriendly to us again.	40
"We should not move to strengthen our ties to Mainland China--it's not in our country's best interest for any reason."	6
Don't know.	13

(See memo of July 24, 1980, at Tab 12.)

[EXCEPT FOR PAGE IDENTIFICATION NUMBERS ...
... WHICH ...]

Detail of Built-in Changes
(dollars in thousands)

Office of Congressional Relations

	American Salaries* Pos.	American Salaries* Funds	Post.Assg. Travel Funds	Operating Expenses Pos.	Operating Expenses Funds	Operating Expenses Page No.	Total Pos.	Total Funds
1982 Current estimate	35	$1,394	--	--	$270		35	$1,633
Built-in changes:								
Increases:								
Annualization:								
1982 Federal salary increase	--	11	--	--	--		--	11
Wage increases:								
Within-grade salary increase	--	11	--	--	--		--	11
Price increases:						7-6		
GPO printing	--	--	--	--	1		--	1
Total, increases	--	22	--	--	1		--	23
Subtotal, built-in changes	--	22	--	--	1		--	23
1983 Base	35	1,416	--	--	280		35	1,696

*American Salaries and Funds are justified at Tab 2 of Volume 1.

Attitudes Towards Arms Control and SALT

Between the spring and fall of 1979, a plurality in favor of SALT changed to a plurality opposed to SALT. The most immediate influences were presumably the opposition expressed during the Senate hearings and the announced presence of a Soviet combat brigade in Cuba. Roper polls trace the shift between April and September (the question wording was revised in July to reflect the fact that the treaty had been signed):

"In June, President Carter for the U.S. and President Brezhnev for Russia signed a new SALT treaty. The treaty, which would last until 1985, limits each country to a maximum of 2,250 long-range nuclear missiles and bombers. As you know, there's a good deal of controversy abvout this proposed treaty. Do you think the U.S. Senate should vote for this new SALT treaty or against it?

	September 1979	July 1979	April-May 1979
For	30%	31%	33%
Against	39	29	24
Mixed feelings (volunteered response)	15	21	20
No opinion	17	19	23

(See memo of October 15, 1979, at Tab 14.)

Roper repeated the same question last January and, most recently, in October:

	October 1980	January 1980
For	26%	22%
Against	36	42
Mixed feelings	20	17
No opinion	19	18

Indubitably, SALT II is currently opposed by at least a plurality of the American public. However, the difficulty of pinning down the size, firmness, and basis of this opposition is illustrated by the differing, and somewhat contradictory, responses to questions posed in a Harris poll conducted early in November:

"In general, do you agree or disagree with President-elect Reagan that the SALT II treaty, which was not ratified by the U.S. Senate, should be scrapped and negotiations should be started again for a new nuclear arms agreement with the Russians?"

Agree	64%
Disagree	28
Not sure	8

Justification of Built-in Changes
(dollars in thousands)

Office of Congressional Relations

INCREASES:

Price increases:

GPO printing..... 11

The Government Printing Office (GPO) has indicated that the cost for labor, paper, and commercial procurement will increase approximately 6% in FY 1983. The increase in these supplies and services will have an impact, therefore, on the cost of printing services. This anticipated increase is commensurate with the inflationary trend of GPO printing costs experienced in recent fiscal years.

Roper poll found that many more Americans believed detente had been more advantageous to the Soviet Union than to the U.S. (by 31 percent to 3 percent). The remaining two-thirds of the public divided fairly evenly between those with no opinion and those believing detente had benefitted both sides equally. Since the latter group probably contained a substantial proportion of respondents without an actual opinion, the most significant figure is the 10-1 ratio of negative views to positive views.

Not many months later, however, Harris polls asked a question that produced responses reminiscent of the recent Harris finding on the public's continued proclivity for "negotiation": "Do you favor or oppose further detente between the U.S. and Russia--that is, closer cooperation and more agreement between the two countries?"

	March 1976	December 1975
Favor	59%	62%
Oppose	23	15
No opinion	18	23

(See memorandum of May 18, 1976, at Tab 18.)

When polled, the American public tends to give high levels of approval to "negotiation" in the abstract. When the negotiation is with the Soviet Union and the abstraction has become an actuality in the form of an accord, the public's skepticism regarding the Soviet Union comes to the fore. What the polls have not revealed is the kind of SALT treaty that would achieve majority support.

Drafted:PA/OAP:BRoshco:mdr
12/3/80 20474

Office of Congressional Relations

Justification of Program and Performance
(dollars in thousands)

Activities	1981 Actual		1982 Current Estimate		Built-in Changes		1983 Base		1983 Program Changes		Total 1983 Request	
	Perm. Pos.	Funds	Perm. Pos.	Funds	Perm. Pos.	Funds	Perm. Pos.	Funds	Perm. Pos.	Funds	Perm. Pos.	Funds
Executive direction and policy formulation												
Executive Direction	5	$173	5	$214	--	$3	5	$217	--	--	5	$217
Congressional Affairs:												
Congressional Liaison	2	86	2	103	--	1	2	106	--	--	2	106
Legislation and Testimony	10	420	10	495	--	8	10	503	--	--	10	503
Inquiries and Correspondence	3	128	3	153	--	2	3	155	--	--	3	155
Congressional Travel	2	84	2	106	--	1	2	107	--	--	2	107
Total	22	891	22	1,073	--	15	22	1,088	--	--	22	1,088

Americans' Commitment to NATO

U.S. polls are notable for lack of specific reference to NATO. The most recent question on NATO, asked in November 1978, showed a clearly discernible increase in the American public's support for the U.S. commitment to NATO. Two-thirds of the public wanted the U.S. either to maintain its present commitment (58 percent) or to increase it (9 percent). Only 13 percent of Americans wanted either to decrease our NATO commitment (9 percent) or withdraw entirely (4 percent). In late 1974, only 54 percent wanted the U.S. to maintain or increase its commitment to NATO, compared to 20 percent who wanted to reduce or terminate it.

Support on Afghanistan and Iran Rated

A Roper poll last spring asked respondents to rate the support various "allies" have given to U.S policies regarding Iran and Afghanistan. Canada ranked first in American esteem. A majority of more than two-to-one believed Britain had supported U.S. positions "strongly enough." On the other hand, a comparable two-to-one majority believed France had not. West Germany fell in between:

Support for U.S. Positions on Iran and Afghanistan

Country	Have Supported U.S. Strongly Enough	Have Not Supported U.S. Strongly Enough	Don't Know
Canada	71%	11%	18%
Britain	53	22	25
West Germany	37	31	32
France	15	53	32

1983 Base Program

The Legislative Management Officers (LMO's) are responsible for liaison with the Hill and for briefing Department policy makers on pending legislation, legislative trends, legislative history, and background. They also recommend actions, aid in the preparation of testimony, assist Presidential nominees in their confirmation proceedings and provide Members of Congress with the State Department position on foreign policy issues.

LMO's, who spend the majority of their working hours on the Hill, require considerable backup support in the office. Four word-processor trained and equipped secretaries provide assistance in preparing reports and other documents. They, and others, also respond to the numerous telephone requests the LMO's receive daily.

Backup support also includes a legislative liaison officer who maintains a library of Congressional documents, assists in the preparation of transcripts or testimony and tracks legislation for the LMO's upon request and a research assistant who assists in the preparation of transcripts for LMO functions and maintains a calendar of Congressional events.

Another of H's responsibilities is to provide efficient, effective, and timely communication between the Department and the Hill, taking into consideration Congressional requests, requirements, principles and sensitivities. H fulfills its role of facilitator of communications through the coordination of Departmental replies to Congressional correspondence. The Congressional correspondence officer, aided by one assistant, reviews all replies to Congressional Correspondence for substance, accuracy, and responsiveness to the Congressional request. They also ensure that timely responses are provided to Congressional inquiries. (Action offices, by regulation, must reply to Congressional inquiries within three days of receipt by their offices.)

Another service provided by H to members and their staffs is the making of arrangements, including visas, itineraries, airlines, hotel, and rental car reservations, for official international travel. This service, like the prompt handling of Congressional requests provides a point of contact between the Department and the Hill and, we believe, facilitates relations between the two organizations.

The travel assistant position is currently being filled by one permanent employee and a summer hire employee. Although two travel assistant positions are designated, we have had difficulty, thus far, filling the second position due to the extensive prior experience applicants are required to possess. As a result, a significant amount of overtime is required on the part of our travel assistant to keep up with the Congressional requests.